

The Bahamas

Trip Information

- **Arrival airport:** Grand Bahama International Airport, Freeport (FPO)
- **Departure airport:** Grand Bahama International Airport, Freeport (FPO)
- **Embarkation Meeting point:** 16:45 in the lobby of Lighthouse Pointe at Grand Lucayan Resort

Flights and Transfers

Lighthouse Pointe is a short walk from Port Lucaya Marina, where MV Bahamas Master will be moored. Our crew will meet guests at the hotel and escort them with their luggage to the boat at the designated embarkation time.

Arrival and departure transfers between Freeport Airport or local hotels and Lighthouse Pointe or Port Lucaya Marina are guests' own responsibility. However, we are happy to organise transfers on your behalf for an additional charge. Please contact our reservations team should you require any assistance.

Advice on International Flights

We recommend that you book flights to and from Freeport (FPO), which is served by several airlines from the US, such as American Airlines via Miami or Atlanta and Bahamasair, Silver Airways or United Airlines via Fort Lauderdale.

Ideally, you would arrive in the Bahamas one day before your liveaboard departure so that you can start your diving holiday well rested. After disembarkation, if you are not remaining on Grand Bahama for any additional nights, please allow plenty of time for the transfer to the airport and check in.

Guests arriving into Freeport on morning or early afternoon flights on the day of embarkation can purchase day passes from Lighthouse Pointe reception to use the hotel facilities, including luggage storage.

Visa and Passports

No visa is required for entering the Bahamas for EU countries, Canada and most other Western countries. However, we always recommend that guests check for updates and

changes with their nearest Bahamas embassy or consulate. Ensure that your passport has validity of at least 3-6 months depending on nationality beyond the period you intend to stay in the Bahamas.

If you are transiting through the United States, you may need a visa depending on your nationality.

US Transit / ESTA

Citizens of 37 countries, including most European nations, Australia, New Zealand and Japan are eligible for an ESTA under the visa waiver program and should apply online at least 72 hours prior to travel. Please refer to the US Department of Homeland Security's ESTA information page for further details and application: esta.cbp.dhs.gov/

Insurance

Insurance which covers scuba diving is mandatory aboard all of our vessels. All guests are also required to carry full travel and cancellation insurance, in accordance with our Terms and Conditions. We cannot be held liable for delays occurring during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of flights, accommodations or tours and transfers that we organise on your behalf.

Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkelling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. We therefore strongly recommend purchasing diving-specific insurance to cover any diving related eventuality.

Master Liveboards act as a referrer for DiveAssure who offer dive and travel insurance policies, including short term and multiple trip policies. Their comprehensive 'Dive & Travel Plus' plan has been specifically developed for diving liveboard holidays and covers expenses in the event of missing your liveboard departure due to flight delays or missed connections, and also provides cover for lost diving days if for any reason the boat is required to abort the cruise; for instance, due to a guest injury, mechanical breakdown of the ship, air supply failure, inclement weather conditions, etc.

Please consult our webpage for details and direct link to DiveAssure's booking portal: www.masterliveboards.com/insurance.

Diving Information

Shark Dives: Scheduled shark dives involve baiting (chumming) or hand-feeding.

On hand-feeding dives, guests will be split into 2 groups of no more than 8 divers. One group at a time is taken to the feeding site with the shark feeder and a safety diver. During the feeding guests kneel on the sandy bottom in a V formation behind the feeder to watch the shark action.

There is often a current from the Gulf Stream around Tiger Beach and, because the sites are no more than 10-15 metres, there can also be strong swells so guests will be given extra weights.

Open Pool: On certain dive sites, after the scheduled baited / feeding dives, there is an open pool policy where guests can jump in the water and watch the action as the mood takes them.

Guests' Level of Diving

It is recommended that guests wishing to participate in scuba diving aboard Bahamas Master have PADI Advanced Open Water* certification, or equivalent, with a minimum of 50 logged dives. You will be asked to show certification cards and a record of your logged dives when you board as proof of experience.

Minimum age for participation in shark dives is 18 years old.

*Guests with the minimum number of required dives but not certified as Advanced Open Water divers, may be able to complete the course on board, depending on the itinerary. Please contact our reservations team for further information.

Any guests who do not fulfil the recommended minimum requirements, or who the crew feel have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives during the liveboard.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the diving conditions please contact our reservations team directly.

Fit to Dive

All divers are responsible for ensuring that they are fit to dive, and are required to complete a medical statement upon arrival in resort. Guests who have any symptoms that could be restrictive to diving will need to obtain a doctor's note clearing them to dive, prior to arriving in resort. The medical statement can be found on our website at www.masterliveboards.com/forms.

If you are unable to complete the statement as directed, or provide a current doctor's certificate (less 1 year old) clearing you to dive, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Diving Safety

Guests are responsible for their own dive profiles and must stay within the limits of their certification.

Use of a dive computer is compulsory on Bahamas Master. For your safety, we ask all guests to always remain well within the limits of their dive computer, follow the instructions of the cruise director and guides and make a safety stop at the end of each dive.

Shark Diving

Even though diving with sharks is very exciting and fun, it has inherent risks. In order to minimize these risks, all divers are required to follow the guidelines outlined in our Important Shark Diving Information, which can be downloaded from the Bahamas page of our website: www.masterliveboards.com/bahamas.

A safety diver will be in the water with guests during all baited and feeding shark dives.

Flying after Diving

Current studies indicate that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple days with repetitive diving before flying. Please keep this in mind when you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Emergencies

In the unlikely event a dive accident occurs, there are two hyperbaric centres in the Bahamas; both are located in Nassau. We strongly urge that all guests dive well within recognised limits, follow the dive guides' advice and, of course, purchase specific dive insurance before their trip.

As per our [Terms & Conditions](#) adequate dive insurance and travel insurance are mandatory.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures range from 22°C in January and 28°C (72-84°F) in August. Most guests are comfortable diving in a 3mm or 5mm full wetsuit. However, your thermal protection should be based on your individual sensitivity and comfort. Guests who are more susceptible to cold, especially when doing multiple dives per day, should consider packing a thicker wetsuit and/or bringing a vest/hood. The diving in the Bahamas is different from other locations due to the shark dives; you will spend the majority of the dives kneeling down or standing in one spot watching the sharks, so you will not be moving much.

Diving Equipment

Diving equipment is available to rent for an additional charge but, is subject to availability and must be pre-ordered.

11 litre (80 cu ft) tanks, weight belts and weights are provided free of charge.

There are a limited number of 13 litre (100cuft) aluminium tanks which are available, at an additional cost, by special request only and must be pre-booked.

Diving with sharks requires DARK coloured equipment and divers must cover as much skin as possible, i.e. full length wetsuit and gloves.

- Brightly coloured equipment, notably white and yellow, will not be accepted - guests should only bring dark coloured equipment or use rental equipment.
- SMBs are not allowed on shark dives!

Equipment rental and Nitrox costs can be viewed under 'Extras' on the Bahamas Master page of our website: www.masterliveboards.com/boats/bahamas-master.

Rebreathers

Bahamas Master is equipped to support rebreather divers. 3 litre (25cuft) DIN valve cylinders and 6 litre (40cuft) bailout tanks with rigging are available to rent, and Oxygen is available at a cost of 0.07 USD per litre.

We are currently unable to provide sof nolime due to unreasonably high local supply costs.

Please pre-book rental equipment and cylinders at the time of confirming your liveboard holiday, as they are subject to availability.

Underwater Photography and Videography

Bahamas Master offers specialised features for underwater photographers and videographers which include:

- Indoor and outdoor work stations for the preparation and maintenance of cameras
- Individual storage drawers for cameras and peripheral items
- Large rinsing tanks with fresh water; changed frequently

Our crew are thoroughly trained in the handling of delicate camera equipment and will provide assistance when entering and exiting the water.

Drones

Drones can only be brought into the Bahamas with pre-approved permission. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bcaa.gov.bs/>

General Information

Advanced Passenger Information (API)

There are certain details that we require for the airlines and our own administrative purposes prior to travel. Guests are required to submit the required information via our secure online portal at www.masterliveboards.com/portal.

Forms

It is a requirement for all guests to complete the following forms prior to or upon arrival in resort - medical statement, liability releases, and safe standard practice statement, which can be found at www.masterliveboards.com/forms.

To save some time, and to ensure you have no pre-existing conditions that could affect your diving, you can download the forms from the above link, fill in, and bring them along. By completing and signing the forms, you are confirming that you have read, understood, and agree to the conditions outlined in the forms

If you are unable to complete the forms as instructed, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Time Zone: The local time in the Bahamas is 4 hours behind UTC/GMT

Money Matters

The local currency in the Bahamas is the Bahamian Dollar (BSD), which is pegged to the US dollar (1 BSD = 1 USD). It is best to bring USD. Most forms of payment are accepted: international credit cards, all legal bank notes, traveller's cheques. There are ATMs on most islands.

Health

Medical care in the Bahamas is generally very satisfactory and medical facilities are comparable to what you would find in most developed countries. Medical facilities can be found on almost all of the islands although the most modern facilities are located in Nassau and Freeport.

Please make sure you use insect repellent and cover exposed skin to prevent any insect borne diseases.

We recommend you consult your doctor, health care professional or travel clinic for up-to-date medical travel/vaccination information well before departure.

Language and Religion

The official language of the Bahamas is English. The population is of mixed religion: 35% Baptist, 15% Anglican, 13% Roman Catholic and the final 37% of the population consists of other Christian beliefs and Buddhism.

Safety and dive briefings on board Bahamas Master will be provided in English. If you do not speak and understand English please let us know prior to arrival.

Climate and Weather

The climate of the Bahamas is a tropical savannah climate, with temperatures averaging between 25°C and 32°C (77°-90°F) all year round, with a cooling down in the evening. The average ambient temperature is 27°C (80°F). December to March are the coolest months with an occasional tropical storm, so warm clothes and a wind & waterproof jacket are recommended. November through April features mild temperatures, lots of sunshine and little rainfall, whereas from June through October, the rainy season, it is slightly more humid and warm.

Life on Board

The main features of the vessel can be seen here:
www.masterliveboards.com/boats/bahamas-master.

Accessibility

Due to the layout of the boat, Bahamas Master may provide challenges, or be unsuitable for guests with limited mobility, and is not suitable for wheelchairs. Please contact us for further details if you have any concerns.

Accommodation

Maximum capacity on Bahamas Master is 16 guests in 8 double occupancy cabins. Single occupancy may be available on request, and is subject to a supplemental charge.

Cabin Facilities

All cabins have individually controllable air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms* with centrally heated hot water. Other facilities include towels, shower gel and lockable safety box.

*Standard cabins have shared en-suite bathrooms.

Food and Drink

Meals are provided on a full board basis including a light breakfast, full breakfast, lunch and dinner served buffet style in the indoor, air-conditioned dining area. A complimentary range of carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices and teas are available at all times as well as instant and fresh brewed coffee, snacks and fresh fruit.

Guests may also select beer, wine, or spirits from our cocktail bar for an additional charge.

We offer a choice of International and locally inspired cuisine and can cater to special dietary requirements with advance notice. Should you have any specific dietary needs, allergies, or special requests, please advise your sales consultant at the time of confirming your liveaboard trip to ensure we are able to make provisions for your needs.

Please note: It can be very difficult to find low-fat or soya products that are common elsewhere. While we always do our best to accommodate dietary requests, please consider bringing some of your own foods if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk or seriously compromise your enjoyment of your holiday.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress on board is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swimwear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Galapagos Master is equipped with laundry facilities and our housekeeper is happy to launder your clothes during the trip for a nominal fee of 1.00 USD per item irrespective of size/weight.

We request that guests respect the wishes of others by donning clothing for meal times. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the vessels; however any island visits included in your particular itinerary may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

Electrical sockets on Bahamas Master are 110v/60Hz. There are a limited number of universal adapters available for guests to use, although we advise bringing your own to ensure you have the amount necessary.

Guests whose electrical items are rated as 220v are advised to bring power adapters with them to ensure their equipment charges correctly.

Staying Connected

We regret that we are unable to provide internet/wifi service on board Bahamas Master. Many of our trips are in remote locations; therefore mobile phone/internet signal is usually poor or intermittent at best. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider. We do have satellite phone communication on board which can be used by guests in the event of an emergency. Our out of office contact numbers can be found below, should your family need to contact you during the cruise. As previously mentioned however, this number is reserved for emergencies only.

Smoking

Smoking on board is permitted in designated outdoor areas.

Environmental considerations

We kindly ask our guests to consider the following to help with our mission to reduce our environmental impact in the Bahamas.

Batteries

While some batteries may be available to purchase on board, please bring extras if your personal dive equipment may require a unique size, or need a lot of replacement batteries during your trip. We kindly request that you take spent batteries home so that they can be recycled or disposed of properly. Alternatively, consider using rechargeable batteries as there are plenty of sockets to plug in a charger on board.

Water Bottles

We are dedicated to becoming single use plastic free across all of our fleets. Plastic straws and stirrers have been banned on all of our boats and we do not provide single use plastic bottles on board.

If you own a sports bottle, we simply ask that you bring it with you, or you can purchase one on board. If you don't have one and you don't want to purchase one, we have plenty of cups on board which you can use to ensure you remain well hydrated.

Plastic bags and wrappers

We do not provide plastic bags for purchases made on board, although reusable canvas bags are available for sale. Please help use minimise plastic waste by removing plastic wrappers and packaging from items before travelling. If you bring plastic bags with you, please reuse them, and take them home.

Toiletries & Sunscreens

We kindly ask that guests consider the type of products which they are bringing with them and, where possible, to bring environmentally friendly toiletries and reef-safe sunscreens for use on board, and to take partially or unused products home with them.

Payments on Board

Marine and Port Fees

Marine park and port fees are dependent on the duration of your trip; please refer to your itinerary details for further information. The applicable amount can be added to your invoice to pay prior to departure, or they can be paid on board the Bahamas Master.

Optional Extras

Additional charges on board for items such as laundry, alcoholic drinks, and Bahamas Master merchandise, as well as equipment which has not been paid for in advance, can be paid in cash or by credit card.

Equipment rental and Nitrox costs can be viewed under 'Extras' on the Bahamas Master page of our website: www.masterliveboards.com/boat/bahamas-master.

All prices on board are quoted in USD. We prefer payment in USD but can also accept cash payments in EUR, GBP, and AUD. However, due to very poor bank exchange rates in the Bahamas, we will apply a 5% fee on any cash payments made in these currencies. Therefore, we strongly suggest that you bring sufficient cash USD with you to cover any extra payments and crew tips on board.

Guests are advised to bring 300–600 USD (or equivalent currency) for any on board extras.

We are also able to accept payment by credit card (Mastercard or Visa) for which there is a 3% surcharge.

Tipping

We believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special; then they will certainly appreciate a tip, in cash only, please. An envelope will be provided for your convenience by your cruise director and gratuities then divided equally amongst all the crew, including the captain and dive guides.

Safety on Board

Emergency Management & Equipment

Bahamas Master crew members undergo rigorous training in emergency management procedures. A thorough boat briefing will be provided by your Cruise Director at the start of your trip during which all guests will be requested to participate in a life jacket drill. Further practice scenarios may be performed during your cruise to assist our crew in keeping their skills sharp. The vessel is equipped with modern safety features such as automated life rafts, EPIRB, satellite communication and emergency pumps.

First Aid

Bahamas Master is equipped with a fully stocked medical first aid kit for treating minor injuries and ailments as well as for assisting trained medical professionals in remote locations.

There is a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments. You will also find on board an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) which has been proven to greatly increase the survival rate in the eventuality of cardiac fibrillation.

Our dive team are all qualified emergency responders. Should you feel unwell at any point during your cruise, please seek the advice of your cruise director who will be able to assist you.

Extending your holiday

Traveling to/from and within the Bahamas can be made exceptionally easy when you book with Master Liveaboards. As well as a range of domestic flights, we can offer hotels, excursions and tour packages, which can be arranged for before and/or after your liveaboard.

Should you require any assistance, please contact our reservations team who will be more than happy to make hotel reservations on your behalf, either in Freeport or close to your US transit airport.

Optional Bahamas package

To extend your luxury feeling and pamper you a little extra, we can organise the following package as an addition to your liveaboard.

We will book accommodation at the hotel of your choice in Freeport for one night before and after your liveaboard and organise transfers from and to the airport, as well as to and from M/Y Bahamas Master.

Excursions

- Swimming with the pigs - Exumas - full day trip incl. lunch and snorkelling .
- Jeep safari on Grand Bahama Island - 5.5hr through pine forest, Lucayan caves and Gold Rock Beach
- Lucayan National Park & Kayak nature tour - 4hr, fully guided, suitable for all ages, including lunch and beach/swim time
- Off-Road ATV, Tropical Garden & Beach Break - 5 hr, curvy trail through natural vegetation. Enjoy a scenic ride along the waterway with beautiful vistas. Introduction into the environment and history of the island. Spend some time at the tropical Garden of the Groves and enjoy the beach at a private beach club.

For further information about hotel and excursion options and costs, please contact our reservations team.

FAQs

If there are any questions that have not been answered, please visit our website at www.masterliveaboards.com or email us at dive@masterliveaboards.com.

Contact Information

Thailand Office - Master Liveboards

10/512 Moo 3,
Tambon Vichit,
Muang Phuket 83000,
Thailand

Open Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:30 and Saturday 09:00 - 17:00 ICT (UTC+7)

Web: www.masterliveboards.com

Email: dive@masterliveboards.com

Thailand Office: +66 (0) 76 367 444

UK number: +44 (0) 208 099 2230

USA (Toll Free): +1 866 258 6398

WhatsApp: +66 (0) 93 574 4529

Bahamas contacts

Operations Manager – Emergency 24 hours

T: +1 242 441 0625

E: bahamas.opsmanager@masterliveboards.com

Cruise Director

T: +1 242 819 8544

What to Bring

The following is a check list of items that you should ensure to bring with you for your trip aboard a Master Liveboards vessel.

Passport

6 month validity & at least 2 empty pages for visa stickers and stamps

Travel Documents

Flight tickets - International & Domestic; hotel booking; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount (additional to park & port fees): 250 - 500 USD
Airport Departure Tax in local currency

Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full battery

Toiletries & Medications

Including sunscreen & insect repellent
Inform booking team of medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

Swimwear, hat and lightweight jacket

Guests are strongly advised to carry essential items in hand luggage in case of lost or delayed luggage through International or Domestic Flights.